Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Trade Union Membership increases

The proportion of employees who were trade union members in their main job increased from 19% to 20% over the year to August 2009, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). This represents 1.8 million trade union members in their main job, a rise of 82,200 from the previous year.

There were an additional 73,100 employees who were members of a trade union although not in relation to their main job. Of the total 1.9 million employees who were members of a trade union (not necessarily in relation to their main job), 63% had been a trade union member for 5 years or more, compared with 10% who had been a trade union member for less than one year.

There were 1.5 million employees who were not a trade union member, but had previously been a trade union member. Of these, 77% hadn't been a trade union member for at least 5 years. A further 6 million (64%) employees had never been a trade union member.

Other findings on trade union membership in main job included:

- the industry with the highest proportion of male employees who were trade union members in their main job was Public administration and safety (46%), while for female employees it was the Education and training industry (41%).
- the occupation group with the highest proportion of male employees who were trade union members in their main job was Community and personal service workers (35%), while for female employees it was Professionals (34%).

More details are available in *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 2009* (cat. no. 6310.0).

Media Notes:

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